

- SUBJECT:** Online resource for teachers of students with special health needs
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Eissler, Hochberg, Allen, Aycock, Farias, Jackson, Olivo, Patrick, Shelton, Weber
- 0 nays — None
- 1 absent — Dutton
- WITNESSES:** For — Bill Carpenter, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE); Rona Statman, The Arc of Texas; (*Registering, but did not testify*: Portia Bosse, Texas State Teachers Association; Harley Eckhart, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Monty Exter, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Dwight Harris, TX AFT; Noelita Lugo, Texans Care for Children; Alejandra Martin, Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators; Jeff Miller, Advocacy Incorporated)
- Against — None
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1322 would direct the Texas Education Agency and the Health and Human Services Commission to establish and maintain a website to provide resources to teachers who teach students with special health needs. It would have to include information about the treatment and management of chronic illnesses and how an illness affects a student's well-being or ability to succeed in school.
- The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.
- SUPPORTERS SAY:** CSHB 1322 would provide to teachers access to accurate and valuable information so that the teacher may meet the individual needs of students and provide a safe and secure learning environment for every student in the classroom. This bill would increase the quality of classroom learning environments, since many students feel more comfortable, and thus able to

learn better, knowing that the teacher is aware of their unique circumstances.

A well-informed teacher can help prevent medical complications. Sickle cell anemia, for example, causes a person to become thirsty frequently so proper hydration is crucial. If the teacher is properly informed, the teacher would know to allow the student to leave the classroom for water or allow the student to keep a water bottle at his or her desk rather than viewing the request as excessive or as troublemaking.

Teachers should be able to recognize a student's illness because in an emergency a teacher can act to stabilize a child — for example, administering epinephrine at the onset of a severe allergy attack.

The bill is intended only to make available an easily accessible information resource and would not place any additional legal responsibility on a teacher or school administrator.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

The committee substitute made Nonsubstantive formatting changes to the bill as filed.